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BACKGROUND OF PARTY LICENCE

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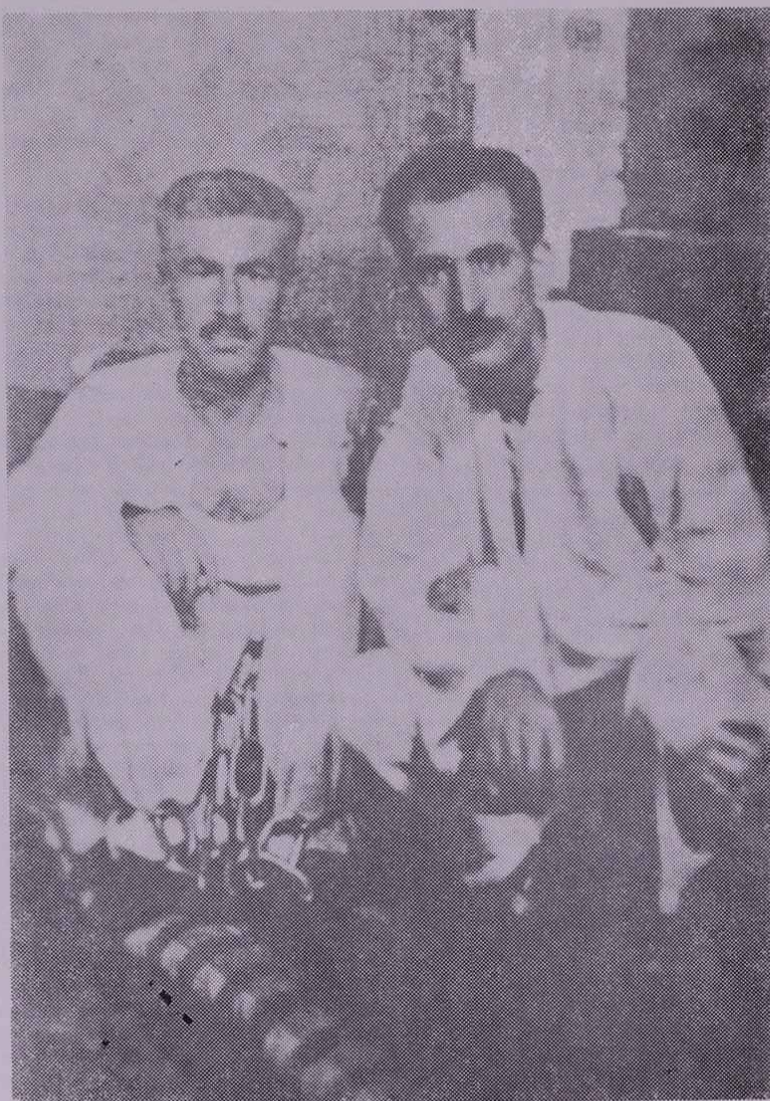
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Comrades Fahad and Zeki Basim photographed in Prison. (See Back Cover).

COMRADE FAHAD AND THE STRUGGLE AGAINST OPPORTUNISM

By Mohammed Hussain Abu Al-Iss, member of the Founding Committee of the Communist Party of Iraq.

The eleventh anniversary of the martyrdom of Comrades Fahad, Zeki Bassim and Hussain al-Shibibi is commemorated today, and today our Party combats revisionist opportunism lead by an opportunist well known in the days of Comrade Fahad. On this occasion we may refer to the past struggle of Comrade Fahad against opportunism in its political and organisational forms and the degree to which it is connected with the new opportunist trend.

Comrade Fahad's struggle against opportunism was mainly in the period of the building of the party and its first steps in the mass struggle. That period was critical for although the Party was born in the year 1934 the repeated blows which it received in the first years of its existence and its lack of experience made the first task of Comrade Fahad — after he came to the leadership of the Party in 1939 — to ensure the building of a firm organisational structure and the upholding of Leninist discipline and democratic centralism in its ranks.

Opportunism arose in the Party for the first time as a trend hostile to Leninist organisation, attacking party discipline and following a liberal line in organisation so as to prevent the working class from forming its iron-disciplined and firmly organised party, and as a result to surrender to the domination and ideology of the bourgeoisie.

As those trends were exposed the Party consolidated itself and took the first steps in the mass struggle to encourage the workers to take advantage of what little legal rights they had to form their trade unions, a "leftist" tune was heard for the first time. What it piped was that "organising trade unions is a premature act". The one who called this tune is the head of the new revisionist rightist clique, who parted company with Comrade Fahad and tried to form a group of opportunists and make them work against the Party exactly as Tro-

tsky had done in his ill-famed "August Alliance". About this champion of opportunism Comrade Fahad said: "They are now aligning all opportunists and dismissed individuals under the leadership — they are all leaders though! — of a new traitor who has recently left our ranks. The aims of this federation are then very well-known; in fact, they shamelessly confess that this federation of various treacherous and opportunist elements is directed against the I.C.P. (Those interested in and acquainted with the activities of the I.C.P. and the labour movement in Iraq know only too well who this "new traitor" is).

This new "champion" actually formed his opportunist group and called for the party to confine itself to underground activities, denying it of all means of open agitation. He obstructed the efforts of the party to lead the masses and the democratic organisations. Eventually he preached accession to the political party of the national bourgeoisie and at the same time vehemently attacked the National Liberation Party, the nearest revolutionary ally of the I.C.P.

In the year 1945 when there was slight possibility of open work, a rightist opportunist movement appeared calling for the cessation of underground struggle and confining the party to open work. This new movement is diametrically opposed to the leftist-opportunist one, which was against any amount of open work. Both movements were utterly wrong. The only correct orientation was the one adopted by the Party, that of cementing the structure of the Party in order to make it a real C.P. on Leninist bases, while simultaneously making the fullest possible use of the possibilities of open work. The circumstances prevailing then made it impossible for the party to come into the open without running the risk of being persecuted. On the other hand, the possibilities of open work, small though

they were, enabled the Party to benefit in penetrating the masses and undertaking a pioneering role in the national movement. Comrade Fahad, therefore, waged a struggle against both deviationist movements and managed to shatter first the "leftist" and then that of "legal Marxism", which outspokenly demanded the very dismantling of the Party. He wrote several articles in "Al-Qaidah" entitled "Dismantling of C.P. a Wrong Slogan" aimed at the latter movement. In these articles he proved the necessity of keeping the C.P. as a party of the workers and of the masses of toilers participating, at one and the same time, in the general struggle for national liberation. Previously, in the year 1944, Comrade Fahad had written: "The Communist parties are not at all similar to clandestine societies whose aims and interests are contrary to those of the people and which resort to plots and terrorism. The communist parties, legal and clandestine, do not hesitate to voice their aims and take a firm stand on anything connected with their class, country or humanity in general. What makes some communist parties resort to underground work is persecution by the ruling class and its governments, which prevent the party from preaching its programme and from forming its organisations openly. Party members are victimized and treated as outlaws (laws of tyrannical governments of course). The Communist are not, needless to say, in love with dungeons and prisons and are not particularly fond of police raids; neither are they impressed by the spy's face following them wherever they go, but they put up with all this and much more than this, for one sole reason, which is dearer to them than homes or relatives: they hate the enemies of their class who stand in the way of human progress". ("A Communist Party, not Social Democracy").

The lapse of time has proved that the Party was right and that

Attitude to Party Licence Clarified

(From "Ittihad al-Shaab" of 10-2-1960)

Yesterday the paper "Al-Mabda" appeared in an evening supplement carrying a licence to Dawood al-Saigh to form a "Communist Party" stating that no objections had been raised by the Ministry of Interior against their application during the period fixed by the Law.

As Ittihad al-Shaab has received inquiries from many citizens regarding this matter, it has interviewed one of the applicants for the formation of the Communist Party of Iraq, who made the following statement:—

"All the people know what took place regarding the Dawood al-Saigh application. That application never fulfilled the legal requirements from the beginning, for it did not submit, as other parties did, anything showing it had the written support of fifty persons having the legal qualifications. Besides that its "founding committee" twice collapsed and lost the legal requirements and this within less than one month.

The first time eight withdrew — including Kadhim Shawi the editor of "Al-Mabda" — and the withdrawal of six of them was published on January 14th 1960, and after a few days that of Ihsan Yousef, who returned later on to the Saigh clique.

On the 3rd of February 1960 eight persons out of twelve took a decision to withdraw the application which they had submitted to the Ministry of Interior and to consider that application as null and void. The Ministry of Interior has the written documents which prove this. Ittihad al-Shaab also has those documents.

As for the eleven names published by "Al-Mabda" yesterday claiming that they are the "founding committee", only three of them signed the application as founding members with the first group. Saigh, Salim Shahin, Ibrahim Abdul Hassan and others became "founding members" at different periods and most of them became "founding members" after the decision of the second "founding committee" to withdraw its application.

Apart from that the application did not state — just the mere statement — that it enjoys the support of fifty persons having the legal qualifications, otherwise why were their names not published in the course of a whole month and even after publishing the "party licence"?

The member of the founding committee of the Communist Party of Iraq then added:—

"We ask the Minister of Interior:— How were these matters investigated with regard to the loss of legality of Saigh's application on two occasions? And why did he not object to Saigh's programme and rules for containing similar words and matter which he objected to when they were in our programme and rules?

This biased attitude to patriotic parties and bodies and the attempt to raise obstacles in the way of the Iraqi working class enjoying its just right to political organisation, embodied in its Iraqi Communist Party — such an attitude does not only harm the democratic life and the freedom of party organisation all the people, but also jeopardizes the safeguarding of the republic. For what the imperialists and their agents work for is to create and widen differences among the patriotic forces and between the Government and some of the patriotic groups, so as to create a breach through which to perpetrate its plots and conspiracies against the republic.

It is clear from the facts mentioned above, that it is incorrect when Saigh declares that his "party" is "licensed" just because a month has passed since he submitted his application without having any objection raised against it. And even if one is to suppose the existence of a "founding committee" and fifty supporters, then the "licence" in itself cannot make a political party, however insignificant.

The member concluded by saying: "We are waiting for the Ministry of Interior to reply to our application as it satisfies all the conditions demanded by the Law. We

Six Patriots from Tellkiff Sentenced to Death

The First Martial Court has passed death sentences on six patriots from Tellkiff. Others were also sentenced to various terms of imprisonment. We have received a copy of a petition signed by 254 inhabitants of Tellkiff and addressed to the Leader, Abdul Karim Qassem. The petition asserted that "these patriots are the staunchest defenders of the Republic, who, prompted by your appeal, rallied to the defence of our national revolution and particularly in the crushing of the criminal Shawwaf insurrection". The petition also referred to the fact that among other things the making of false accusations against faithful citizens was envisaged by reaction in preparation for the fourth plot. Readers will remember that Ittihad al-Shaab edited a summary of the lawyers' statement in defence of these patriots. The lawyers reminded the Court that the case had once been closed because the real assassins were unknown. It was brought up again when preparations for the fourth plot were afoot, particularly because the accused were active members of democratic organisations and faithful to the Republic and its leaders.

Moreover the lawyers contended that a letter issued by the Military Governor considered all cases of murder committed before midnight 12-13/3/1959 as assistance of the government against the enemies of the Republic. The murder of two plotters at Tellkiff took place on 9-10/3/1959, which comes within the period specified.

In conclusion the petition requested that a just investigation be carried out by an unprejudiced committee so that justice should be done to all innocent patriots and so that those responsible for these cooked-up accusations be severely punished.

Another petition to the same effect signed by 10,000 people was sent to the Government.

refer to the fact that we have submitted our reply to the objections of the Ministry on the 8th of this month, as was published in Ittihad al-Shaab yesterday".

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SAIGH'S RECORD

For the benefit of our readers abroad who are not familiar with the Iraqi Communist movement, we republish some brief facts about the record of Dawood al-Saigh, who was made into a "leader" and given a licence by the Ministry of Interior to form a "Communist Party".

At the time of the second world war when the loyal and conscious forces and elements were devoting their efforts to unite themselves in order to defeat the fascist aggressors, Dawood As-Saigh devoted, since 1943, his efforts to split the unity of the labour and national movements. He was expelled from the ranks of the Communist Party and worked for gathering some opportunists and politically backward persons in a subversive and dissident faction that was called, "Rabitat el-Shuyien" (the league of communists) to fight the Communist Party and its leadership and particularly the person of its leader Fehad instead of fighting fascism and imperialism. This organisation published a newspaper which was called "Al-Amal" (labour) and continued under the leadership of Dawood As-Saigh its subversive activity, but nevertheless it continued to be a worthless, insignificant clique both politically and numerically and failed to get any mass support among the people.

In 1947 As-Saigh was arrested and he did not display any persistence — as thousands of the valiant sons of our people have done —, he confessed on a number of the leaders and members of his own clique and caused their imprisonment for varied periods.

In the same year, those who were deceived by Dawood As-Saigh met and decided — while he was in prison — to dissolve their clique as a dissident and opportunist faction. Most of them applied to join the Iraqi Communist Party as individuals. He himself did not admit his mistakes and opportunism; in fact he preferred to live alone isolated from those who were with him and from the Communist Party and the organisation of the progressive political prisoners.

When he was at the head of his

opportunist faction, his activity was not confined to fighting the Communist Party alone. In addition, he practiced subversive activity against the patriotic parties and drove his clique and supporters to join the National Democratic Party in the hope of dominating its leadership during the elections. This conduct caused a crisis inside this party and inside the national movement in general.

After his release from prison he continued, as he was, to remain outside the Communist Party, and all his attempts to form a new opportunist faction met with failure.

In 1956 he applied to join the communist party. The party asked him to define his stand from his previous subversive activity and to exercise self-criticism. He presented a letter in which he criticised his past and admitted that he performed opportunist factional activity which is contrary to Marxism-Leninism and promised that he will work to re-educate himself under the leadership and guidance of the party, but he hid from the party in that letter the fact of his confession on a number of his group in 1947. The party took a constructive stand towards him and gave him the chance to return to its ranks after he lived 14 years outside it. The party put him under test and assigned him some tasks which the party thought him capable of accomplishing. Yet he was characterised by his indiscipline, in competence and inability to accomplish any task he was assigned to perform — no matter how small it was. When the party asked him to go underground in the old regime, he refused because of his cowardice and fear.

As a result he was no longer invited to party meetings even before July 14th Revolution in 1958.

At the second half of 1959 when the national movement in our country was subjected to a crisis and when the reactionary forces revived and imperialist and reactionary propaganda inside and outside our country fought our republic in the guise of "combatting communism", Dawood As-Saigh once again resumed his subversive activity. He vio-

lated party discipline and order and started collecting the bands of opportunists and those dismissed from the party and led them in hostile activity. The party strove to give him a guiding hand lest he should deteriorate politically and go back to the marsh of opportunism. Yet he insisted on fighting the Communist Party and published his newspaper "Al-Mabda" which became an instrument of subversion. This compelled the party to expel him from its ranks.

Saigh tried in vain to split the ranks of the communist party. He remained isolated and denounced by all the Iraqi communists and the supporters of the party. In fact the politician who respects himself cannot contradict himself and does as Saigh has done. He wrote himself, "the patriotic classes may have more than one party except the Iraqi working class for its sole party is the Iraqi Communist Party like every working class in any other country" (Al-Mabda 29-12-1959). Then after one week, Al-Akhbar reported on the 5th instant a statement in Saigh which said, "he will not act alone for the formation of a political party ... and that there must be no more than one Communist Party in one country", (following that our Party exerted new efforts to bring him back to the correct path, but the efforts were in vain). Five days after his statement i.e. on Sunday the 10th, Al-Mabda appeared carrying on its first page what he called the "programme of the Communist Party" and an appeal from its "founding committee" to the members of the party to "save it", as well as the following news: "Dawood As-Saigh and his comrades applied the day before yesterday to the ministry of Interior for the licensing of the Iraqi Communist Party in its legal form".

Those who constructed this lie forgot that the "day before yesterday" was a Friday which was the official holiday of all the offices, and that Al-Mabda was published on the 8th and 9th of Jan. and made no reference whatsoever to the request of licensing "their party".

And finally the people who know

Saigh Condemned By International and Arab Working Class

International Solidarity with the Iraqi Communist Party

The world press still abounds with comments and statements made by the organs of fraternal communist parties who have condemned, and still are condemning, the anti-party and opportunistic behaviour of Saigh's clique. The Soviet press, notably Pravda, Izvestia and Trud, edited front-page articles quoted from Ittihad al-Shaab. The articles were also repeatedly broadcast from Radio Moscow. Ittihad al-Shaab had, Radio Moscow announced, issued a National Manifesto coupled with an application to the Ministry of Interior signed by Comrade Zeki Khairi and his co-founding group. According to the Manifesto, the Iraqi communists put the task of achieving the objectives of the 14th July Revolution in the forefront. The Radio also added, "The chief objectives for the realisation of which the Iraqi Communist Party is now struggling are: elimination of the last remnants of imperialistic tutelage and exploitation; consolidation of the country's independence and liquidation of feudalism; distribution of land to peasants and the development of national industry; preservation of democratic rights of the people and the amelioration of economic and cultural standard of the people. Similar quotations from Ittihad al-Shaab were also reproduced by the organs of several other communist Parties including RUDE PRAVO.

Saigh's Record Cont. from p. (8)

As-Saigh and his position in the communist movement ask: who are his "comrades"? and why does he not publish their names, addresses and the names of their supporters as the three parties have done?

There is no fate for opportunism other than one which is known by Dawood As-Saigh and his like who are well-versed in opportunism and subversion.

Arab Communists Condemn Saigh

Under the heading "Daoud al-Saigh's 'party' al-Nida, a Lebanese paper, wrote: "Saigh will soon realize, from experience, that the licence which he now holds must be put in a museum where it belongs. The Iraqi people, workers, peasants and intellectuals, a quarter of a century ago, licensed the real Iraqi Communist Party". The paper then pointed out that progressive public opinion all over the world has condemned Saigh. "The fact is that the news of Saigh's licence was received by all friends of the Iraqi people with surprise and indignation". The Iraqis together with all Arabs and the entire people of the world know full well that the Iraqi Communist Party rallied to the help of the Revolution and participated in warding off all the plots hatched against the Republic. The paper also reminded Saigh that he has become the favourite topic of Nassir's as well as imperialists' press and broadcasts. It was not for nothing, the paper argued, that Radio London and Voice of America never tired of praising Saigh. In conclusion, the paper advised Saigh to reconsider his harmful attitude if he was really inspired by the interests of the working class which is bound to have one and only one political party.

Statement Cont. from p. (4)

attacked communism while hypocritically claiming to be communist, and there were many reactionary parties that called themselves "socialist" or "popular" or "democratic". What are really the important things are, the actions, the political plans and the defence of the people's rights. And whatever name may our founding application to the Ministry of the Interior our Party, which carries the banner of communism in our country, will remain to the end as the people has known it to be, the party faithful to the interests of the people, their revolutionary gains, the interests and the ideas of the working class, the ideas of Marxism-Leninism.

Under the heading, "The Imperialists and Covetous are not Expected to Applaud any Step Beneficial to Iraq and its National Movement" al-Akhbar, another Lebanese paper, censured Saigh who, by his behaviour, has cheered up the imperialists and the covetous. All the foes of the progressive movement and national liberation are now busy applauding Saigh. This, if nothing else, the paper adds, must serve Saigh as a good warning. Ironically, the paper asked Saigh what sort of licence did he mean. The Iraqi Communist Party existed a quarter of a century ago and Saigh had merely revolted against all its rules and regulations, its time-honoured traditions and classics. The history of the Iraqi and other communist parties of the world, the paper warned, abounds with examples of what miserable fate "awaits all who trod along the path which you have chosen now". At any rate, one thing must be as clear as a pick-staff. A man is either well-meaning and in that case he must soon realize that impairing a major national force cannot but, in the last analysis, serve the ends of the imperialists and their allies. Or, on the other hand, he is not sincere to the cause but is alien to it. In this case, he must be held responsible for all the bad consequences that his action entails. Concluding, the paper added, "The path of righteousness and success is obvious to all who want to see".

Reply of I.C.P. Cont. from p. (5)

unding committee whenever he wishes by a written application to the Ministry of Interior, a copy of which is handed to the Founding Committee.

6. The Founding Members of the party are:

Zeki Khairi Said, Tawfik Ahmad Mohamed, Husain Ahmed Al-Radhy, Aziz Ahmad Al-Shaikh, Abdul Rahim Shorif, Kadhim Al-Jassem, Dr. Khalil Jamil Al-Jawad, Amer Abdullah Omar, Abdul Kadir Ismail Al-Bustani, Karim Ahmed Al-Dawad, Elias Hana Kohari, Mohamed Hussain Abu Al-Iss, Dr. Hussain Ali Al-Wardi, Ahmad Mulla Kadir Banjalani, Abdul Amir Abbas Al-Abid.

ON THE FOUNDATION OF ITTIHAD AL-SHAAB

Ittihad al-Shaab Correspondent interviewed Hussain al-Radhi, one of the applicants for the formation of the Communist Party of Iraq, and put to him the following two questions:

First question:

Many of the readers of our newspaper Ittihad el-Shaab do not know the circumstances in which the central organ of the Party al-Qaida was changed into Ittihad el-Shaab. Could you enlighten the readers about those circumstances and how the new name was chosen? And what is the role played by Ittihad al-Shaab before the revolution?

Second question:

As one who followed our newspaper Ittihad al-Shaab during one year, do you think it performed its duty as required? And what are the shortcomings of the newspaper and what do you propose for avoid them?

First answer:

At the beginning of 1956 the ICP was proceeding with its struggle against the imperialist feudal domination which was imposed over the country. During that struggle which was full of sacrifices and consciousness, the masses of the people rallied around the banner of the national struggle which was raised by the Communist Party and the rest of the patriotic forces staunchly and persistently.

Under those circumstances the work for the unity of the patriotic forces assumed a paramount important — as it always does — but the existence of factional trends and organisations working against the Communist Party and against its unity obstructed at the time the task of the Party in dedicating its efforts for the unity of the patriotic forces. Thus the struggle of the Party against those organisations and trends became part of its general national struggle. The Party realised this fact with full clarity and tended to intensify its activities and firm struggle to expose the divisional ideas and trends on the one hand and to

Interview with:
Husain Al-Radhi

handle the question of liquidating those organisations with a positive spirit on the other hand. It is necessary to point out at this respect the work of the 20th congress of the Soviet Communist Party which furnished — at that time — the Party and the communist movement in Iraq with great ideological assistance in this respect.

Thus the representatives of the Iraqi Communist Party and the representatives of the two organisations: "Rayat al-Shaghila" (the Banner of Toilers) and "Wihdat al-Shuyien" (the Unity of the Communists) entered into negotiations which were prevailed by a constructive principled atmosphere and were culminated at the end of April of that year with the admission of the "Wihdat al-Shuyien" organisation of the erroneousess of the continuance of its independent activity and independent organisation as long as the Communist Party was existent and continuing its struggle stubbornly and courageously. And thus its militants applied for the membership of the party and authorised the Central Committee of the Party to issue a statement to that effect. And thus a statement was issued on April 25th. Those negotiations were also culminated with the issue by Rayat al-Shaghila organisation of their famous statement on June 13th 1956 in which it admitted that it pursued a wrong subversive and splitting activity by establishing its independent organisation and leading centre and in which it stated that their step which they previously called the "saving" of the Party was an overt breach of the Marxist-Leninist principles which stress the preservation of the unity of the Party. The militants who worked with Rayat al-Shaghila applied for the membership of the Party. At that time too, other people applied to join the Communist Party and submitting with their applications

notifications of self-criticism, of whom I remember — by the way — Dawood as-Saigh who admitted in June 1956 that he "had violated the discipline of the Party and defied the leadership of the Party" when he worked in its ranks in the latter period of the second world war. He also admitted that his formation of the "Rabitat al-Shuyien" (the League of Communists) afterwards was a wrong subversive act of division and he requested that the membership be given to him again.

Those results were a brilliant victory for the Party and the teachings of Marxism-Leninism which called the Central Committee to issue its famous manifesto on June 17th 1956 in which it welcomed the new Party militants and called for the reinforcement and consolidation of the Unity of the Communist Party. In addition to that the statement not only laid bare the factional ideas and slogans but it also criticised the bureaucratic standards in which some problems of the comrades were handled in the past. At the time when the factional organisations were dissolved and those working in their ranks abandoned their opportunist slogans and ideas and put themselves under the disposal of the Party, it was the duty of the Party to ensure in its internal life a principled atmosphere liberated from the legacies of the previous state of division and a loof from the aspects of "victory" and "defeat" except the victory of Marxism-Leninism and the principle of the unity of the Party except the defeat of the opportunist concepts and activities. In expression of the feeling of the Party in this duty and in order to draw the attention of the comrades to it and to educate them with it, the Central Committee decided to change the name of al-Qaida the central organ of the Party and thus al-Qaida published in its No. 6 in 19th June 1956 — which was the 1st issue of it — an appeal in which it invited the comrades and the friends and readers "to express their proposals in choosing a new name which is convenient to

the noble tasks placed on the newspaper of the Party".

After the publication of this appeal, the Party received hundreds of proposals for the new name to its newspaper which include — as far as I can recollect —, "Ittihad el-Shaab", "Nidhal el-Shaab", "al-Iusaniya", "Sawt el-Shaab" (the voice of the people), "al-Haqiqah", "al-Mugawama" etc. The most repeated were "Ittihad el-Shaab" and "Sawt el-Shaab" and we had to choose one of these two nice names. Sawt el-Shaab was more lucid and more expressive for a newspaper published under illegal circumstances in which the freedom of press was almost non-existent and thus it could really be the voice of the people. But the name of Ittihad al-Shaab was much more powerful in view of its identification of the principal task of the Party — namely to contribute in uniting the patriotic forces of the people. The reinforcement, the consolidation and unification of the Communist Party and the ending of the activity of the factional organisations had provided the Party more favourable circumstances to dedicate its efforts the unity of the people and their patriotic forces.

Those were the circumstances and the way in which the name of the central organ of the Party was changed from al-Qaida into Ittihad el-Shaab everybody remembers the struggle Ittihad el-Shaab performed at the same year for the "unity of the people" and the patriotic forces in the front of national unity was borne as a result of the 1956 uprising.

As for the role which was shouldered by Ittihad el-Shaab before the revolution, in fact it had no role independent from the role of the Communist Party itself which was the biggest political popular organised force in the national movement. Ittihad el-Shaab was its central organ and effective instrument in guiding, mobilising and leading the masses of the people in the national struggle which resulted with great mass actions such as demonstrations, strikes uprisings and this great mass consciousness which the entire world witnessed it in its most brilliant forms after the 14th July revolution whose fire was started by the army under the leadership of Abdul Karim Kassim. The role played by the Communist Party in the

national struggle throughout a quarter of century is only belittled by those worthless individuals who are ready to deny the sun in the middle of day time if their masters asked them to do so.

Answer Two:

In my opinion Ittihad el-Shaab was during the last year a good model for the press which want to spare no effort in serving the people and their triumphant republic. It is not without significance that it enjoys respect from the toiling masses of the people and this concern it receives from the various patriotic quarters and from outside the country and the friendly forces who sympathise with the just cause of our people.

It was indeed the organ of the working class and the peasants, the organ of the revolutionary intelligentsia and the rest of the people Arabs, Kurds, Turcomans and others. It is indeed one of the organs of the militant and progressive Arab liberation movement and faithfully expressed the principle of the solidarity of the international working class and the progressive mankind in the whole world.

Ittihad el-Shaab guided the national struggle in Iraq against imperialism with perfect straight forwardness. It propagated the idea of the unity of the patriotic forces and its importance in safeguarding the republic. It fought for turning that idea into a concrete patriotic reality and actively contributed in arousing the noble revolutionary feeling among the masses of the people.

Therefore appreciation and admiration is the simplest thing which we can offer to all those worked in editing, publishing, printing and distributing it — those unknown soliders who worked silently with self-sacrifice and relentlessly. As for me, I view their efforts with admiration and inspiring from them more of spirit of militance and devotion in the struggle.

Among the characteristics of those who are working in Ittihad el-Shaab is the fact that they do not fall in the disease of "self-contention" and their display of the spirit of self-criticism for developing and improving Ittihad al-Shaab. This gives encouragement to express some of observations about the shortcomings of the work of Ittihad al-Shaab:

First — any newspaper that puts into consideration its readers or those whose interests it defends must view this fact not only in tackling the various subjects but also in the standard of the language and the style it uses. And undoubtedly the main readers of Ittihad el-Shaab are workers, peasants and the rest of the toilers in general. Moreover the plan of the newspaper is to defend their interests side by side with performing its general national tasks. Therefore this aspect of the language and the style of writing should be observed and the newspaper must strive to simplify its style and clarify it to the maximum possible. It is noted that Ittihad el-Shaab did not pay sufficient attention to that and its language and style is in general more complicated even than the rest of the national press which compels the workers and peasants readers of the newspaper to exert more efforts to grasp its contents.

Second — Ittihad el-Shaab is in need of additional measures to strengthen its relations with its readers and correspondents and in need of paying more attention to their letters by allocating a special field for that and through personal correspondence with them.

Third — it is noted that Ittihad el-Shaab is not up to standard with regards its reporting capacity whether in connection with the international, Arab or local news.

Fourth — Ittihad el-Shaab is not in a convenient standard of paying attention to the daily problems of life of the masses. Its studies in this respect are less than they should be.

Fifth — in the field of the Arab liberation movement, it is noted that Ittihad el-Shaab is the most concerned of the national press in this field. This is something good. But certain shortcomings are observed in this respect, namely that it does not deal with some historical information about the ideological movement and Arab nationalism which confirm the connection and bonds among the peoples of the Arab countries. The dealing with the ideological heritage of the Arab movement and nationalism and their connection before the first world war will condemn the policy of patriation which was imposed on the Arab

peoples by the British, French and Italian imperialists and world Zionism. It has a progressive implication for the Arab liberation movement at the present circumstance. We can find in that heritage a treasure of democratic and liberal ideas.

Six — the readers of Ittihad el-Shaab recently missed the section of "the voice of the Kurdish people", which is an extremely important field of the newspaper fields in view of the importance of consolidating the ideas and material basis for the common struggle of the Iraqi people with its two main nationalities the Arab and Kurdish and its national and religious minorities, and in view of the progressive implication for defending the

special demands of the Kurdish people and the development of their national feeling in the direction of defending the republic and its independence and democratic orientation.

Those are the most important observations which I can see at present about Ittihad el-Shaab. I regard the important measures are to strengthen the editorial staff, to rid the editors of too much work, to provide chance for them to mix more and more with the masses, the increases of the number of the mobile reporters, the strengthening of specialisation, the strengthening of relations between the editorial board and the rest of the progressive writers, researchers, and editors in the Iraqi republic and to encourage

them to contribute Ittihad el-Shaab and consult their opinions and the opinions of the readers and to study what they have to say attentively. All these measures or any of them would help in developing the newspaper and improving its activity and would satisfy the people and influence them more effectively.

I know that Ittihad is the most widely circulated national newspapers and I believe that the improvement of its work will score for it double success in performing its noble mission in safeguarding the republic and its independence and democratic course and in spreading the class consciousness in the ranks of the toilers and in fulfilling its obligations towards the working class and the Iraqi people.

CHADERCHI CALLS FOR NATIONAL FRONT

In answer to a question put to him, Sayid Kamil Al-Chaderchi made the following statement to "Al-Thabat" newspaper.

I firmly believe that party life is the surest guarantee of democracy and is part and parcel thereof. I believe that democracy and all that goes with it such as parliament etc. are prerequisites for defending the Iraqi Republic and further developing it. Genuine democracy can only thrive in an atmosphere of liberty in which human dignity and political rights count for much. This is exactly why I should very much like to see martial law now in force brought to an end with the termination of the transition period in order to enable the political parties and the press and all patriots to practise the liberties guaranteed by the provisional constitution and other laws of our Republic. The fact that martial law is reminiscent of abnormal

situations and that the transition period was ended and party life restored is a proof that the conditions which once necessitated martial law in the early days of our Revolution no longer prevail.

In answer to another question Sayid Al-Chaderchi added: "The unity of the ranks under democratic rule as such is that all political parties feel that there are a number of vital questions which are common to all, such as facing a common threat or achieving common objectives, which otherwise cannot be achieved. It is with this end in view that national fronts are formed in certain conditions and times. Iraq was and still is in urgent need of such a front. The front was necessary under the old regime in order to bring about the downfall of the corrupt regime and eliminate imperialist control and their hostile pacts. Whereas at present the need for the front is to defend

the Republic, cement democracy and bring about stability and confidence necessary for the further development of our national economy, etc. These are tasks which no single party can achieve. Neither will the front become a reality unless all its adherents really mean what they say and are prepared to co-operate in handling the questions agreed on. The unity of ranks will not be beneficial — it may even be harmful, if it does not embrace all national parties concerned and is not prone to monopoly or inter-front alignments. For it is assumed that the unity of the ranks or the national front as I would rather like to call it, is a political body which is formed only when all parties feel that there are common objectives for them all. Needless to say that all sides to the front must be allowed to pursue their political activity provided they abide by the common aims of the front.

Iraqi Review Interview

TRADE UNIONS IN IRAQ

("Iraqi Review" special interview)

On February 9th, the First Congress of the Iraqi Trade Unions opened in Baghdad. The Congress held by Iraqi workers last year was the Founding Congress.

The Congress received messages from many countries greeting the Iraqi workers. In its proceedings many reports were read and decisions taken concerning the reinstatement of victimised trade unionists who were discharged on grounds of their trade union activity. The Congress demanded the release of detained trade unionists. It stressed the need for strengthening the working class movement and making the social security act all-embracing.

"Iraqi Review" has interviewed a member of the executive committee of the General Federation of Iraqi Trade Unions Mr. Abdul Kadir Al-Aish and put to him several questions regarding the congress. Here are his answers:

Question: Would you tell us briefly something about the Iraqi Trade-Union movement, the number of Trade Unions in the Federation, the number of members in each and the percentage membership for each trade?

Answer: The trade union movement in Iraq dates back to 1929. Its sphere of work enlarged after the general strike of 1929. Some setbacks were felt by 1933 and following on this it underwent great pressure. Its leaders were hounded by the authorities. By 1936 some attempts were made to re-organise the movement but no sooner had they started than they were badly crushed. The modern trade union movement started in the year 1944. During the period from 1944 to 1946 some sixteen trade unions were formed, but they faced many difficulties and were subject to suppression and governmental opposition. This fighting of the trade unions ended in 1948 by closing some down and banning others. The year 1950 witnessed a rise in the working class movement, thus the unions resumed their activities and a permanent bureau for them was for-

med in 1951. Once again their activities frightened the imperialists. As a result, all these unions were banned and their active members was imprisoned or forced into exile. So the trade unions had to go underground until the dawn of the 14th July. The movement came out into the open and there was a mighty upsurge of organisation among the workers. Attempts were made by divisionist elements to dominate the trade unions and divert them from their class basis. But the consciousness of the working class and the long experience they had acquired as to the far-reaching dangers of such factions shattered these efforts, and the trade unions all joined one central organisation. At the present time there are fifty-one trade unions, but some are united with other unions, making the actual total forty-four trade unions, which is also the number of the member unions in the General Federation. These unions have a membership totalling 280 thousand trade unionists — that is for those working in industrial enterprises.

Here some figures of the membership of the main trade unions:

Railways	13,000
Oil	16,000
Ports	9,500
Building and Construction Sites	69,500
Post and Telegraph	5,800
Electricity	6,000
Municipality projects	15,000
Passenger Transport Administration	2,351

The average percentage of trade-union members to non-members is 80%, while in some major industries, such as Oil, Railways and Electricity the percentage rises to above 90.

Question: What are the main tasks of the First Congress of your Federation?

Answer: The Congress is held under the slogan: "Workers of Iraq unite for safeguarding the republic, developing the national economy and for general social security!" These are briefly the tasks of the of our first congress.

Question: Could you mention the main problems and obstacles that face the Iraqi workers, their trade unions and the federation in general?

Answer: To increase production is one of the main points. There was an increase in production of seed-oil and soap for example of 18%. Reports submitted to the Congress by some trade unions included proposals for improving the work. The Printers' Union for example put forward proposals for the complete automation of the State Press in order to solve the current printing problems. The trade unions demanded that means of production be improved and that measures be taken to reduce the costs of production as a necessary step towards increased production and the development of the national economy.

Social security is confined to a small number of workers in industries employing more than 30 workers. The present state of affairs does not correspond to the modern development of economy. Hence our Federation demands the extending of social security to all Iraqi workers. Such security would include health insurance and unemployment and old-age benefits.

Safeguarding the republic by consolidating the unity of the working class movement. There are, of course, some tendencies that hinder and discourage the trade union movement. Such tendencies can be found in some official and employers' circles. Nevertheless from the start of the trade union movement there was a nation-wide move for affiliation, which requires the existence of a large number of experienced cadres.

Question: What in your opinion is the importance of the affiliation of the Iraqi Federation of Trade Unions to the World Federation of Trade Unions, and what steps has your Federation taken to consolidate the relations with workers of the Arab countries and of the world?

Answer: We endeavour to establish good relations with the wor-

ITTIHAD AL-SHAAB COMEMORATES ITS FIRST ANNIVERSARY

On Friday, January 29, Ittihad al-Shaab held a party to celebrate the first anniversary of its coming to light in the new republican regime. Comrade Abdul Kadir Ismail, editor-in-chief, had, on behalf of all editors and contributors, extended invitations to ministers, officers, leaders of political and social organisations as well as to members of Diplomatic Corps of Arab and friendly countries. At about six o'clock in the evening guests began to appear. Among those present were: Dr. Ibrahim Kubba, Minister of Agrarian Reform; Dr. Mohamad al-Shawwaf, Minister of Health; His Excellency Tal'att al-Saibani, Minister of Planning and His Excellency Abdul Latif al-Shawwaf, Minister of Commerce. The ambassador of Hungarian Peoples' Republic was also present. Other ministers sent their messages of congratulation and apologized for being unable to attend owing to previous engagements. Messrs. Mohamad al-Sa'doon, Khadoori Khadoori, Na'el

Sanherie, Abdullah Abass, Fadhil Muhdi and Dr. Ja'far al-Hassani, all from the National Democratic Party, attended the party. The Democratic Party of Iraqi Kurdistan was represented by Messrs. Ibrahim Ahmad and Helmi Sherrif. Among the guests also were: Baghdad Mayor, Chief Military Information Officer, Commander of People's Resistance, Col. Jallal Balattah and Sayid Adnan Babajan both from People's Court. Sayid Hamid Rawabhiyah, representative of Algerian Provisional government together with press attaches to the Embassies of U.S.S.R., People's China, People's Bulgaria, Democratic Germany and Czechoslovakia also presented themselves.

Other guests of Ittihad al-Shaab were: Mohamad Muhdi al-Jawaheri, the famous Arabs' poet; Salih Bahir al-Uloom, Sayid Abdul Fettah Ibrahim; Sheikh Latif Hafeedzadah; Kadhim al-Samawi, acting director of Broadcasting Station.

Journalists from nearly all newspapers and periodicals of Baghdad attended the party. Scores of professors and important government officials also attended.

The guests were welcomed by Comrades: Abdul Kadir Ismail, Zeki Khairi, Mohamad Hussein Abu al-Iss, Amer Abdulla and Abdul Raheem Sherrif together with other staff and editors of Ittihad al-Shaab. The walls of the hall were decorated with slogans for the realisation of which Ittihad al-Shaab had vehemently struggled.

Among other things entertainments included national songs and folklore.

Kurdish songs and dances were performed by a group of Kurds.

The guests were at last seen off by the editors and staff of Ittihad al-Shaab who promised to continue their message dedicated to the well-being of the people and its prosperity.

kers' trade unions in the Arab countries. We have at present good relations with the Moroccan Labour Federation and the Labour Federations of Tunisia and Algeria and with the Trade Union Federation of Lebanon. Before the 14th July there were some relations with the General Federation of Arab Trade Unions but the reactionary Naserite elements in the leadership of the Federation caused the cessation of this cooperation. We sincerely desire to have strong relations with the trade unions of all Arab countries for the defence of Arab workers' interests and for Arab solidarity.

As for our relations with the World Federation of Trade Unions, although our affiliation was declared on December 17, 1959, our trade unions did have firm contacts throughout its underground and legal activities and received support ever since the foundation of the World Federation in 1945.

Our Federation has relations with many countries of the world, such as Indonesia, China and others. We strongly desire to establish relations with all trade unions of the world and particularly those of Africa and Asia.

Question: The membership figures of the trade unions show a great rallying of the workers around their unions. This fact is worthy of consideration in view of the youth of the legal trade union movement and the under-development of industry in Iraq. What in your opinions are the causes of this phenomenon?

Answer: The trade union movement since its formation in 1944 was the object of suppression. It pursued its activities underground to defend the workers' interests and to raise the consciousness of the various strata of the working class. No sooner did it come into the open than its aims became apparent and its stand in defence of the workers'

rights and interests became known to an ever-increasing number of the population. This in our opinion is the reason for this massive rallying around the unions.

Question: What are the achievements of the trade unions for the welfare of the Iraqi workers?

Answer: The main and most important achievement of the trade unions is the procuring of higher wages for the overwhelming majority of the workers in the large establishments and for agricultural workers. The minimum rate increased from 120-350 fils daily, and by 10% in other smaller establishments. Other achievements are the opening of anti-illiteracy centres, the provision of reduced medical assistance, the formation of cultural art groups, as well as the arranging of lectures, while cultural committees have been formed in every trade union. In addition, the trade unions have helped to solve many labour disputes.



Comrade Hussain Mohamed al-Shebibi, executed by Nuri Said rigime together with Comrades Fahad and Zeki Basim on Feb. 12, 1949.



Iraqi Commonists putting a wreath on Comrade Fahad's grave.

Iraqi Teachers vote for the Democratic List

On February 13th more than twenty thousand Iraqi teachers went to the polls to elect their representatives for the general council of the Iraqi Teachers' Union. There were two lists to choose from, one is the "Teachers' Front", representing the right wing and anti-democratic elements and the second is the "United Vocational List" representing the democratic teachers. The result is a crushing defeat for the right wing and a major victory for democracy. The "United Vocational List" won in twelve of the fourteen provinces and got 91% of the seats (432 seats out of 500). The democratic list also won in Baghdad, Mosul and Basrah.

W. F. T. U Greet Iraqi Workers

W.F.T.U. sent the following telegram to Iraqi Workers Congress

On behalf more than 100 million members World Federation of Trade Unions extend to participants your Congress and through you to working class and all workers in Iraq its warm fraternal greetings We wish you still greater success in the struggle for the defence of interests Iraqi workers and people and safeguarding national independence. W.F.T.U. delegation has not yet got visa which explains absence from your Congress. Fraternally.

Louis Saillant,
General Secretary, W.F.T.U.

183,000 Support the Iraqi Communist Party so far

Ever since the Iraqi Communist Party field its application signed by Comrade Zeki Khairi and his co-founding group, thousands of citizens have written (with copy to us) to the Ministry of Interior in support. Today, Monday, Feb. 15, the total number of signatories has just reached 183,000 from all over the country. The supporters, coming from different nationalities and various social strata, present a cross-section of our militant people and their attitude to the Iraqi Communist Party and its loyal leadership.